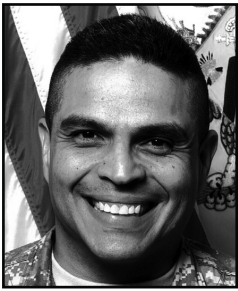


# NCO EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM (NCOES): WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD



BY COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR  
JOSE L. SILVA

During the past two years, the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School (QCM&S) has been making significant changes in how it trains Warrior Logisticians. Old tactics, techniques, and procedures that supported “Cold War” doctrine have been phased out and implementation of training more reflective of our contemporary environment has paid big dividends for our advanced individual training base. Applying the same revolutionary process to our Basic and Advance Noncommissioned Officer Courses (BNCOC and ANCOC) has proven to be challenging.

For years we trained our NCOs to be technically and tactically proficient. However, the resources committed were geared heavily towards technical training for each military occupational specialty (MOS). This approach always left us with less time to train on the tactical skills. We took pride in our core competencies and we ensured our NCOs were the best they could be once they reported back to their units.

After September 11, 2001, and during the initial stages of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, it became clear that balance between tactical and technical training throughout the combat service support arena needed improvement. The Global War on Terrorism, operational tempo, Army restructuring, and the recognition that we are Soldiers first and technicians second, are driving forces changing our Noncommissioned Officer

Educational System (NCOES). Consequently, during summer 2004, it was decided that tactical training needed more emphasis in our program of instruction. Taking a hard look at our BNCOC and ANCOC, we did a “first scrub” of all the technical lessons in our nine specialty areas to determine which courses had more relevancy and what courses of instruction could be either shortened or eliminated. These actions allowed for growth in tactical training and the addition of new tasks to our logistic warrior matrix. We redefined the tactical training for BNCOC and shifted several courses from ANCOC to BNCOC. As a result, BNCOC became the technical template for ANCOC, while the latter became heavily geared towards warrior tasks and drills. The initiative came from within the QMC&S and focuses on lessons learned and feedback from the Soldiers coming back from areas of operation.

A “second” scrub, proved easier since training some tasks and drills had already been revised and shortly after completing this task we thought we were done, but “surprise,” a third scrub was on the way. In July 2005, we received Fragmentary Order 1 to Operational Order 05-165A NCOES Transformation. The situation paragraph read: “CG TRADOC directed TRADOC schools and centers to conduct a detailed analysis of their respective ANCOC courses.” End state: enhance warfighting relevancy by incorporating warrior tasks and drills, reducing resident courses to less than eight weeks, and designing courses for rapid implementation emerging doctrine. Operational tempo and unit life cycle demanded this change.

NCOs were already spending a year away from home each time they deployed. Once

---

their tour of duty was completed, they had to go through the stages of reintegration, block leave, recovery, unit training, and then prepare to deploy once again. Somewhere in between these stages, NCOs had to go to their respective MOS enhancing schools to ensure they were still competitive for promotion. Attending NCOES courses 11 to 12 months in length was just out of the question. The turnaround time had to be shortened so the NCOs could return to their families or back to their deployed units.

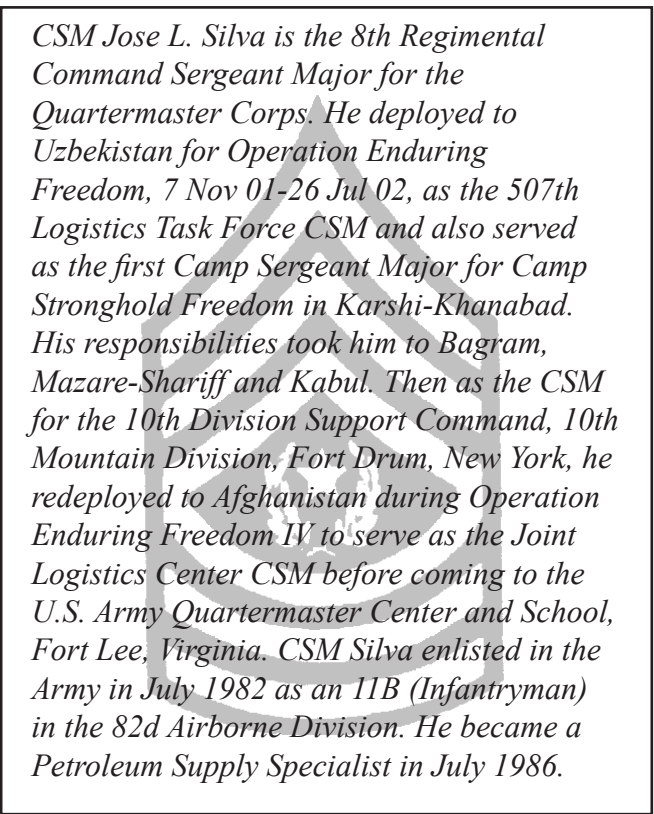
By the time this “third scrub” tasking was received, most of the warrior tasks and drills had been added to courses and most of the courses were already less than eight weeks, with the exception of the 92A (Automated Logistical Specialist) and 92F (Petroleum Supply Specialist). Once again, we had to place the courses under the microscope and determine how to go about making the new changes. We took some risks, broke some china, and made some difficult decisions and we met the goal.

Another scrub involving all BNCOC courses is expected... more tactical, less technical training. The QMC&S understands the implications and challenges that this brings and is already planning for the short and long term effects on the training program. What will the future look like? Are we ever going to recover that one technical task that went away? These are complex questions that will require valid and perhaps difficult answers. Yet one fact remains the same, as an Army at war we need to do what is necessary to ensure success during this period of painful but needed change.

TRADOC is already looking at ways to bridge the gap. Mobile training teams, distance learning, on-the-job training, unit training/certification, virtual training, and video-teleconferencing are just a few of the tools that are at our disposal to

keep technical training up to date. In the rapidly and radically changing training environment that our NCOs face we must continue to meet the demand for warrior logisticians able to fight, survive, and support their units and fellow Soldiers. The QMC&S is striving to find innovative ways to ensure that our Quartermaster warriors become and remain proficient in their tactical skills. NCO technical skills training and proficiency will become a shared responsibility between the schoolhouse and commanders in the field. We will train them in what we believe are critical technical skills while their units will have to fill in the white spaces.

Transforming NCOES is a major “muscle movement” and without fail we will make sure the Quartermaster Corps continues to fulfill the requirements of leading, teaching, mentoring, and coaching, as well as fighting and supporting. After all, we are the backbone of the Army, and this is where the rubber meets the road.



*CSM Jose L. Silva is the 8th Regimental Command Sergeant Major for the Quartermaster Corps. He deployed to Uzbekistan for Operation Enduring Freedom, 7 Nov 01-26 Jul 02, as the 507th Logistics Task Force CSM and also served as the first Camp Sergeant Major for Camp Stronghold Freedom in Karshi-Khanabad. His responsibilities took him to Bagram, Mazare-Shariff and Kabul. Then as the CSM for the 10th Division Support Command, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, New York, he redeployed to Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom IV to serve as the Joint Logistics Center CSM before coming to the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School, Fort Lee, Virginia. CSM Silva enlisted in the Army in July 1982 as an 11B (Infantryman) in the 82d Airborne Division. He became a Petroleum Supply Specialist in July 1986.*